

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO
EASTERN DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	:	CASE NO. . 1:23-CR 00394
Plaintiff,	:	JUDGE: MCFARLAND
vs.	:	
	:	
DUNCAN RAY	:	<u>DEFENDANT DUNCAN RAY’S</u>
Defendant.		<u>CHARACTER LETTERS</u>

Defendant DUNCAN RAY, through undersigned counsel, submits this additional character letters for the Court to consider at his sentencing hearing.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Rhonda L. Kotnik
Rhonda Kotnik (0077345)
Counsel for Defendant
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on November 19, 2024 a copy of the foregoing was filed electronically. Notice of this filing will be sent by operation of the Court's electronic filing system to all parties indicated on the electronic receipt. All other parties will be served by regular U.S. mail. Parties may access this filing through the Court's system.

Rhonda Kotnik
333 South Main St.
Suite 401
AKRON, OH 44308

July 18, 2024

My name is Damon Lundgren. I have been incarcerated for 35 years. During that time nearly 600,000 people have passed thru the ODRC system. Many of them thru the prison in which I live.

I met Duncan Michael Anthony Ray in February of 2020. He had just transferred here and was placed in the same housing unit. In all my years I have never met anyone who displayed as much strength and growth as Duncan. He had been an addict since he was a pre-teen. And he decided he was no longer going to use drugs. And he did exactly that! He QUIT! Not only did he quit - he was able to abstain when his celly used. People offered him drugs for free - he refused.

He demonstrated a moral and ethical strength I have NEVER seen in any other inmate.

(2)

He began studying music and art. He learned to play classical guitar. He learned to play piano. He learned to paint.

He did numerous paintings that he simply gave away because someone liked it. He recorded numerous pieces of music and original compositions that he never knew he was capable of.

In short - he blossomed as a person and began to see himself as something more than a worthless reject.

Unfortunately, he became more and more afraid that he was not yet capable of continuing to grow in a freer environment. In a moment of panic he wrote the letters for which he is now in custody.

I can honestly say the letters do not reflect the person he had become, but are a manifestation of fear brought on by facing freedom as an adult for the first time as a sober and individual person.

For what it is worth, I know that Duncan is not a real threat, and that his growth and continued

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maturations are not aided by being in prison. I sincerely hope that consideration can be given to the growth and change that Duncan began on his own, & achieved thru hard work & dedication. I hope that he can be free sooner than later, and his growth can continue in a way that allows him to re-establish real relationships with his remaining family and child.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Damon J. [Signature]

Your Honor,

Tues. Oct. 15th 2024

I am writing this letter hopefully for the benefit of Mr. Duncan RAY. Now before I get started, I want you to know that I am not a professional in human behavior and the diagnosis of issues of the brain. That being said, I do however have 22 years experience with Autism. My son is on the spectrum. Most people are not aware how Autism works. Duncan shows an enormous amount of signs of having Autism. The speed at which his brain works was the first sign I noticed. As I got to know him better I noticed that he excelled in certain activities such as writing poems and songs. The way he walks, the way he carries himself, sensory issues, its all there, all the signs of autism. I believe that Duncan has had the misfortune to be improperly diagnosed his whole life. Autism was newish when my son was diagnosed 22 years ago. I believe that had he been diagnosed properly he would have had lived a much different life. People really do not realize that although autism affects certain habits and ways of thinking, it accelerates others to past genius levels. I firmly believe the letters he wrote to certain officials were a

product of his fast moving autistic brain. Furthermore he had no intentions of carrying any of them out. I believe he was in a situation that his brain could not resolve because he wasn't on the proper medicine and had no prior education on coping with his autism.

Autism episodes present different in some individuals and I am quite sure his presents in writing. Some individuals with autism show episodes in self mutilation like banging their heads on hard objects and need to wear a helmet at a young age.

Depending on where they are on the spectrum, they can overcome and/or handle the episodes in a better manner with education, experience, and possibly medicine. Just from my experience with autism I have seen these wonderful people with this condition become loved, productive members of society. Not only do I believe Duncan has autism his Daughter I found out has been diagnosed with autism as well. I beg of you to have an expert on autism to evaluate ~~is at~~ Mr. Ray if at all possible before sentencing him.

P.S. I do believe Duncan has a form of High Functioning autism.

Thank You,
Michael T. Alexander
Michael T. Alexander

10/17/24

Duncan Ray is like a brother to me. We have become so close I felt I had to write this letter. Especially because I know him best and I have witnessed a genuine and God fearing man. His new faith has turned him into a good dude.

I must express how much he regrets what he has done and the poor decisions he made. Prison is known to change a man, but God is also known to change a man. I can testify to this in him and in my own self as well.

I want him to go home finally. It's been nearly a decade and between his family and my own we are looking out and forward to his release.

May you please have mercy and understand his situation. I want you to know he has been doing ministry and helping people. He has helped me in profoundly deep ways from staying clean to rebuilding my spirit and faith. I know his daughter misses him. Please consider everything. Please. Thanks - Aaron Bertovich
an BT

10/17/2024

mi nombre es Daniel conocí a Donking 2 meses atrás cuando llegue a Jail soy muy Creyente en las cosas de Dios y se que llegue aqui y lo conocí Por un Propósito soy una persona que si tengo que decirle a alguien eso esta mal lo digo Tengo 49 años 7 hijos From 17 to 29 y a el lo considero un hijo mas que necesita la ayuda Para seguir adelante una vez lo vi haciendo algo que no estaba bien y le dije oye siquieres cambiar tu vida no Puede hacer esas cosas y al Pasar los dias Puede ver que me abia escuchado y comence a ver el cambio hasta llegar a lo que es ahora, es el que nos trae los estudios biblicos los martes y sabado siempre viene donde mi y me dice esto es lo que Tengo Para el sabado o el martes que tu opina, luego nos sentamos a hablar de lo que quiere hacer cuando termine su Proceso, es increíble el cambio que e visto en el de verdad que Dios Tiene grandez cosas Para con el y cada dia que pasa Puedo ver su motivacion y firmeza en lo que quiere.

Honorable Judge,

I am Daniel Kraft, a friend of defendant Duncan Michael Anthony Ray, and today I am writing as a character witness in support of him for your consideration.

I am incarcerated at the Mansfield (Ohio) Correctional Institution (ManCI), inmate #A230-044, where I have served 35 years of my 50-Life Sentence.

At ManCI, I have worked as a certified tutor for Adult Basic Education and High School GED, and I voluntarily donated 20,000+ hours of free labor to make hundreds of fine art and craft Community Service projects for non-profit groups and organizations. I am viewed as a "model inmate" that has a "leveling influence" in the institution. Currently I hand score original and arrangement compositions for incarcerated string quartet and ensemble musicians to perform in the Oberlin College String Program at Grafton (Ohio) Correctional Institution (GCI).

Prior to prison I was a college, university, and art school student in Iowa, Illinois, and Maine. I worked as a professional artist/craftsman

and musician; and in fine art galleries in Ohio and San Diego, California.

I first met Duncan in February 2020 in my housing unit at ManCI. He had just transferred here and had about 3 years left to do on his sentence.

Duncan was an easy person for me to like and love. He and I immediately became friends and we have remained so since we first met. I continue to stay in touch with his mother, Dawn, by phone.

Here at ManCI, Duncan and I spent much of our time sharing every detail of our lives with each other. We survived COVID together. I taught him how to make fine art paintings: he painted 12 impressive images that he gave away to his family and friends as gifts of appreciation for their support. I taught him how to play classical guitar: he composed several original pieces for the instrument, including "Midnight Walk" and "Unspoken Syllables." Duncan wrote a poetry chapbook titled "Psycho Logical," that he intended to get published with my illustrations. In addition to filling many notebooks with poetry,

Duncan wrote many song lyrics: his literary compositions expressed the emotions and experiences of his life, internal struggles, regrets, drug addictions, love for family and friends, and his unquenchable desire to build a better life for his precious daughter Larissa.

Here, Duncan was drug and alcohol free and did not participate in any gang activity. He was determined to become a better person and he made remarkable progress to that end, much to the notice of his family and friends.

One friend, Stuart of Columbus, was so impressed by Duncan's progress that he trusted Duncan to the extent that — prior to Duncan's prison release date in August 2023 — Stuart got his home approved for Duncan to move in, found him jobs, established a support network of friends and professionals to help him with re-entry, and even found teachers willing to further Duncan's artistic development.

In his endeavor to become a better person, Duncan attended Ashland University classes, completed the TYRO program, became a dog handler in TLDC, worked in Maintenance as a plumber and learned

to weld, volunteered without pay to work for ARAMARK in the chow hall dish room in the heat of summer without AC, and Dungeon mastered D&D games in the housing unit that were enjoyed by a packed room.

Further, Duncan sought psychological testing, counseling, and therapy from Mental Health Department liaisons, with whom he spent many hours talking to about his mental health issues and history. When he suffered a crisis he immediately sought help from Mental Health staff and submitted to a 24 hour observation in isolation. Duncan called his mother every day and Stuart as often, and he regularly emailed and called many other family members and friends. He comforted his mother when his brother committed suicide.

When the pain of severe bunions in both feet became unbearable, Duncan used the grievance process to get medical shoes, because the medical department refused to treat him.

Duncan regularly attended Jewish Services and impressed the rabbi / professor of Judaism enough that the rabbi agreed to help him through the

conversion process to become a Jew immediately after his release from prison.

Duncan proved himself to be intelligent, highly observant, an accurate judge of character, a good listener, honest, trustworthy, helpful, and a valuable worker and friend to both staff and incarcerated persons here, and was sought out for advice and problem solving. He was quick to make other people laugh and to give away his food, hygiene products, clothes, and shoes to help people in need. He purchased a pair of Nike shoes for my birthday.

However, from time to time Duncan expressed to me and to others a dark desire to continue living in prison because of how much he enjoyed all the benefits Man CT gave him: a loving and caring support group, new friends, good teachers for trade skills, good teachers for art and music skills, positive programs and activities, mental health services, religious services, a structured daily life, confidence, popularity, and rigid schedules and restrictions that made it easier for him to stay focused on self-improvement, and on his creative projects. The contrast of Duncan's prison life at Man CT against his life before prison made prison life seem more appealing and attractive to him.

As I understand it, before prison Duncan had lived a broken family life, gang life, mental institution patient life, and a life of drug addiction, sexual abuse, homelessness, crime, aimlessness, and unhealthy relationships.

wherefore, when I learned that Duncan had secretly written and sent the threatening letters to federal judges that constitute the evidence in his federal case, his mother Dawn, friend Stuart, and I discussed him and his behavior (the letters) at great length and concluded he had done this stupid thing to force an indictment against him that would ultimately leave him to continue living his life in prison, like he wanted and expressed. The Duncan I know is not capable of harming or extorting anyone, but he is capable of acting on emotions in immature ways.

I am convinced the letters absolutely do not contain any genuine or sincere threat to anyone, but are merely the product of an infantile heat of the moment emotional hissy fit designed to keep Duncan from facing his future of responsibility outside prison.

Unfortunately, the persons Duncan threatened were

not his loving and caring parents this time, who would have - because they know him - taken his words for what they truly are - the fearful scream for help of their immature child - and so would have forgiven him for it, and tried to help him grow up and overcome his fear, and ultimately accept responsibility for his future life outside of prison.

I am convinced there is excellence in Duncan that requires an excellent support system to be expressed in the world to the benefit of others and himself. His loving and caring family and friends, and mental health professionals, outside of prison would provide him that excellent support and serve him better than a prison sentence.

I believe Duncan is worth saving.

Sincerely,



Daniel Kraft

A230044

Man CI POB 788

Mansfield, OH 44901

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Sincerely,
Drew J. [Signature]